

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

Subject

Support and Encouragement of Farming in San Diego County

**Policy
Number**

I-133

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Purpose

The Board of Supervisors is committed to supporting and encouraging farming in San Diego County through establishment of partnerships with landowners and other stakeholders to identify, secure, and implement incentives that support the continuation of farming as a major industry in San Diego.

Background

San Diego is defined as an urban county, however, farming covers 265,041 acres and ranks fifth as a component of San Diego County's economy. For every dollar of agricultural product value, a multiplying factor of 3.5 may be applied to estimate the full economic impact of agriculture, which calculated to nearly \$4.8 billion in 2003.

With 5,255 farms, San Diego County has the third highest number of farms in the United States. San Diego County is ranked eighth in the State of California based on the gross value of its agricultural production, leading the state in nursery products, flowers and foliage, and avocados. In San Diego 92% of the farms are family owned and 77% of the farmers live on their land. Farming in San Diego also plays an important role in maintaining the region's environmental quality.

San Diego's farmers have been very adept at responding to changing market conditions and taking advantage of the region's unique climate and geographic resources. However, competition for land with urban development, increased water costs, and invasion of foreign pests and diseases, has placed continuing pressure on the industry.

The United States Congress recognizes the importance of protecting farmlands from urbanization. They also recognize that through creating public/private partnerships they can play an important role in the protection of the nation's natural resources. During reauthorization of the Farm Bill in 2002, Congress introduced and enacted several economic incentive programs that encourage farmers to address farming and environmental quality.

The State of California also implements a number of farmland incentive programs, including the California Farmland Conservancy Program that complement and leverage the federal incentive programs.

Farming contributes to the conservation of habitats for plants and animals including rare and endangered species. Federal and state wildlife conservation incentive programs provide opportunities to coordinate conservation of both habitat and farming resources through public-private partnerships.

The County will play an important role in coordinating this program by providing information to organizations and stakeholders that are interested or engaged in farming.

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It is a policy of the County of San Diego to develop and implement programs designed to support and encourage farming in San Diego County.

Responsible Departments

1. Department of Planning and Land Use
2. Department of Agriculture Weights and Measures
3. Department of Farm and Home Advisor

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-2011.

Board Action Date

05/11/05 (8)